

MASS. ED14. 1/2: 984/85



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

BOARD OF REGENTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

ROOM 619, MCCORMACK BUILDING

ONE ASHBURTON PLACE

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02108-1530

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS
COLLECTION

SEP 8 1988

1984 - 1985
ANNUAL REPORT

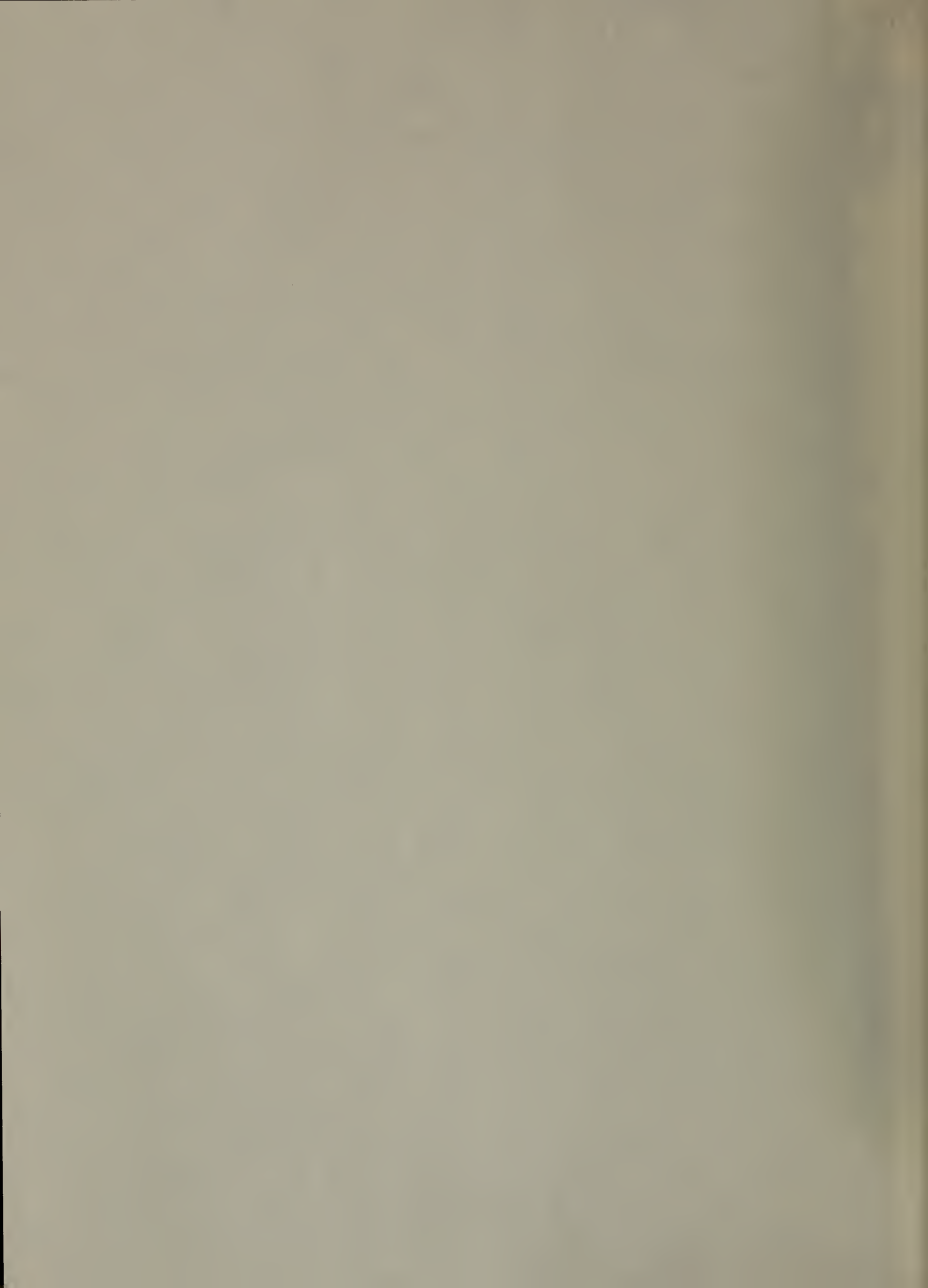
University of Massachusetts
Depository Copy
BOARD OF REGENTS LONG RANGE PLAN FOR PUBLIC
HIGHER EDUCATION IN MASSACHUSETTS

Introduction

In June 1982 the Board of Regents of Higher Education adopted Phase I of A Long-Range Plan for Public Higher Education in Massachusetts, outlining policies to assure a higher education system of quality, responsive to changing educational needs, and both accessible and accountable to the public. The Plan contained more than fifty directives, including academic program review, admissions standards, and articulation within higher education. Like other initiatives of the Board, it strove for a productive balance between institutional autonomy and central systemwide governance.

At the campus level, the Plan established a process for each college and university to prepare its own five year plan within the common policy guidelines and general mission statements prepared by the Regents. For some campuses, this was a new experience; for others, it entailed the meshing of existing institutional planning efforts with the Regents' long range planning process. While planning among public institutions is certainly not new, the integration of institutional concerns to statewide program planning and resource allocation brings a new dimension to the process.

During 1984-1985, the systemwide planning process in Massachusetts public higher education achieved new levels of breadth and integration. It is now closer to the goal, set forth in the legislation that created the Board of Regents in 1980, of an articulated, comprehensive process addressing both statewide issues and the individual mission and future of each college or university.



Review and Approval of Institutional Plans

During 1982-1983, the Board instituted a systemwide process within which each college and university in the system engaged in a concentrated campus planning effort to draft institutional five year plans within the common policy guidelines established by the Regents. These plans are updated annually, and may be supplemented by special reports on particular topics. This effort has three major objectives: to develop on each campus an effective institutional long range planning capability; to assure that individual plans are consistent with systemwide policies established by the Regents; and to provide the Regents with campus perspectives on important statewide issues and priorities.

The 1985 campus planning cycle is being conducted in two phases. The first is an update of the long range plan, similar to that requested in 1984; updates have been submitted by almost all campuses and are now being evaluated. The second, a first draft of a five year institutional enrollment plan (due January 31, 1986) is described separately below. The 1985 Guidelines for Section I, the Update, include the following:

- (1) A progress report on campus plan implementation, with descriptions of new initiatives proposed;
- (2) Description of the relationship between the long-range plan and campus FY 1986 and 1987 budget priorities (replacing the former new program budget narrative);
- (3) Description of how findings of statewide and institutional program reviews, accreditation reports, etc., are incorporated into the planning process;
- (4) Description of steps being taken to improve recruitment and retention of minority and other "nontraditional" students.

We have seen continued improvement in the effectiveness of campus planning throughout the system over the past three years. As points (2) and (3), above, suggest, there has also been progress in integration of academic program review and budgetary considerations into the comprehensive planning process.

Enrollment Planning Project

The most pressing challenges for many colleges and universities, and for Massachusetts higher education as a whole, over the rest of this century will probably be those arising from rapid demographic change. Changing enrollment patterns raise complex issues for higher education, with broad implications for the system and the Commonwealth. To help promote understanding of these important public concerns, the Regents have initiated an integrated process of systemwide and institutional enrollment planning.

The Regents' Enrollment Planning Project will improve planning and management in public higher education. It is a multi-year project designed to provide a longer term demographic context for institutional and systemwide planning by foreseeing the potential impact of demographic changes on public higher education in the Commonwealth; anticipating the nature and timing of enrollment shifts; and creating a framework for comprehensive and appropriate responses to these shifts. There are several notable aspects of the project: the standardization of data being used, the development of enrollment forecasting software tailored to individual campus enrollment patterns, the interactive nature of the project, and the ease of annual updating of forecasts.

Each campus has been requested to provide its own historical enrollment data in standardized form, which will be updated annually with data generated by the Regents' Enrollment Audit System, now being implemented. Campus forecasts will thus be based upon enrollment patterns specific to each institution. Standardized demographic forecasts by city and town, produced by the Center for State Demographic Projections, will be used by each campus in making its enrollment forecasts.*

* An important "spin-off" of the Enrollment Planning Project has been the creation of the Center for State Demographic Projections, located at the Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research, at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. The Center is funded by a consortium of state agencies and will continue to provide detailed, updated city and town demographic forecasts for a variety of planning purposes. The Center is emerging as a major statewide resource, and an outstanding example of public higher education's service to the Commonwealth.

Computer forecasting models have been developed for use by two and four year colleges and universities. This software, designed to run on any IBM-compatible personal computer, incorporates the individual historical application and enrollment data for each campus mentioned above. The model applies the campus's own specific rates to the standard demographic forecasts for each of the Commonwealth's 351 cities and towns, producing an individualized enrollment forecast that is nevertheless comparable on a systemwide basis.

The interactive nature of the project is particularly important. Major demographic changes are coming and neither the pace nor the geographic distribution of these changes will be uniform. Campuses will experience different types of application and enrollment shifts. Flexibility will be key in the face of significant changes; anticipation of these changes and their potential impact is an effective way to build an understanding of the need to embrace change. Enrollment planning, integrated with long range planning, must take place at both the campus and systemwide level. The software developed for the Project enables campuses and the Board of Regents to forecast enrollments under a variety of assumptions.

Each campus will develop its own enrollment plan according to guidelines and with the assistance of software developed by the Board of Regents. The initial plans, due in January 1986 will include unadjusted projections and adjusted preliminary forecasts that will provide baselines for ongoing institutional planning. The Board will review and comment on these initial enrollment plans in light of systemwide enrollment considerations, and campuses will be asked to incorporate fully developed enrollment plans into their 1986 campus plan updates.

Campus and systemwide enrollment forecasts will be updated annually. As data availability improves and the modeling effort is refined, econometric analysis of enrollments by type of institution is planned. The Project's potential for bettering our understanding of factors influencing enrollments trends, and our ability to address vital public policy issues, will grow year by year.

Integrated Comprehensive Planning

Beyond its efforts to support effective planning on the campuses, the Board of Regents continues to move toward broad integration of systemwide planning procedures. The Enrollment Planning Project, as it develops, will become a major component

of this effort. In FY 1985, notable progress was made in linking comprehensive planning with both operating and capital outlay plans.

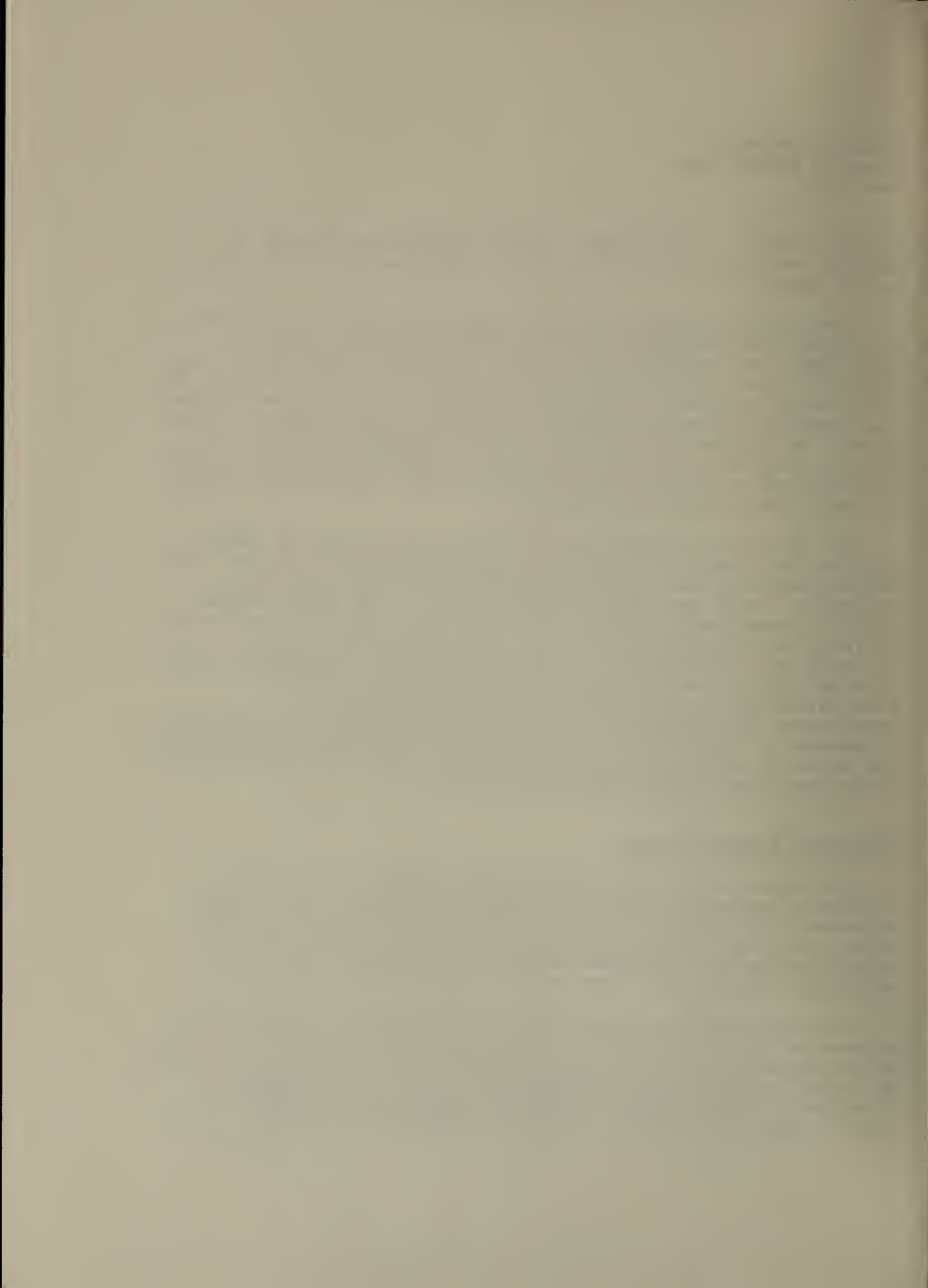
The Board's highest general budget priority for FY 1987 is a category called Grants for Program Improvement, which supersedes the former "new academic programs" categories. The Grants program is designed to be responsive to the needs of the campuses as laid out in their long range plans. Requests under this program are presented and evaluated in the context of the plans. To further strengthen the link between planning and budget, campuses beginning with the FY 1987 budget process are now required to outline their annual budget priorities as part of their long range plan updates.

The Board has worked closely with the Division of Capital Planning and Operations during the past year to facilitate the capital planning and budgeting process for public higher education. DCPO has begun to make use of long range campus plans in examining capital outlay requests, and in developing a strategy to prepare new long range facilities plans for colleges and universities. DCPO and Regents' facilities staff have met jointly with campus representatives to review submissions for funding in the 1986 capital budget. Demographic forecasting and enrollment planning have particular relevance to capital budgeting; DCPO has expressed interest in the Regents' Enrollment Planning Project, and in supporting the Center for State Demographic Projections.

Statewide Program Review

The value of the statewide program review process to program planning and resource allocation became increasingly apparent. In nursing and engineering, the subjects of the first round of reviews, the Board requested a supplementary appropriation for equipment which, if provided, will allow efficient targeting of resources to high priority areas.

Business Administration was the program area selected for statewide review in 1984-85. The review process involved all three segments of public higher education (25 campuses) as well as twenty independent colleges which chose to participate. Programs in each segment in both the public and independent sectors were reviewed by external evaluators from peer



institutions. The chairman of the review committee submitted a preliminary report to the Board of Regents in June 1985.

The statewide review of education programs, scheduled for 1985-86, is the largest and most complex review undertaken by the Board of Regents. The scope of material being evaluated extends beyond specific degree-granting programs to include individual teacher certificates offered by the various campuses. There are approximately 350 individual teacher certificates issued by 44 public and independent colleges in the Commonwealth.

Institutional reviews of natural and life sciences at the baccalaureate institutions, and of programs in dental health and culinary arts at the community colleges, were also completed.

Non-state public postsecondary institutions

During the past year the Board of Regents, with Legislative support, took several steps toward rationalizing the status of the remaining locally controlled public postsecondary institutions in Massachusetts. Roxbury Community College took over operation of the Boston Business School from the city's public school department, and Blue Hills Technical Institute in Canton was merged into Massasoit Community College. Negotiations to transfer the collegiate programs at Essex Agricultural Institute in Danvers to North Shore Community College, which already awards their degree credit, are proceeding. In June, at the request of the Joint Committee on Education, the Board prepared a preliminary report on the provision of community college services to the South Shore area, with particular attention to the future of Quincy Junior College.

Tuition policy revision

In March 1984 the Board of Regents adopted a systemwide Tuition Policy affirming that tuition policy should be grounded in the public mission of our higher education system: Service to the Commonwealth through programs of excellence for all qualified students. Tuition charges must be linked to equitable public funding of higher education, and must not increase except in the interest of educational quality. They should reflect a carefully considered balance between the taxpayers' commitment to the support of state colleges and

universities, and the ability of students to pay the charges imposed. Recognizing the paramount importance of maintaining access to the system for all students, the Regents' policy caps the share of educational costs to be assumed by students, and on the annual increase in tuition charges. It stresses, too, that financial aid programs should be commensurate with tuition increases and with total student expenses.

In order to clarify the intent of the policy, the Regents in December 1984 ammended it to re-emphasize their commitment to maintaining broad access to public higher education. Reference to students' ability to pay was made more explicit, and indices of personal or disposable income for the state were identified as appropriate measures.

The tuition schedule adopted for the 1985-86 academic year continues implementation of the standards established in the Tuition Policy. Again, increases were well below statewide indices of income growth. Tuition equity was advanced within the system: Those institutions where students paid above-average shares of the educational costs were given smaller increases. And the continuing increase in state scholarship and tuition waiver aid ensures that none will be denied access to public higher education because of the financial impact of these charges.

Admissions Standards

Dissemination of information about the Admissions Standards has been a top priority during 1984-85. Two publications were prepared concerning the Admissions Standards Policy. The first, "Planning for Colleges: A Guide for Counselors and Teachers", is a booklet containing a detailed discussion of the policy as it relates to guidance counselors and teachers. The second, "Plan Now for College Success: A Guide for Students and Parents," is a brochure designed to encourage parents to help their children plan for college. This latter publication has been bulk-shipped to school systems for distribution to parents and students in individual districts. Copies of the booklet have been sent to every high school guidance office in the Commonwealth.

Articulation

The revised Commonwealth Transfer Compact adopted by the Board of Regents became the official policy of all public colleges in September 1984. As required by the Compact, all

presidents/chancellors appointed a Transfer Officer to represent their campuses and to assume responsibility for the implementation of the revised Compact. The findings of the statewide review of nursing programs led to creation of a special task force on articulation in that field.

Collaboration with Primary/Secondary Education

The Board of Regents has maintained its strong relationship with the Department of Education. In addition to this state-level cooperation, the School/College Collaboratives between public schools and higher education institutions continued to be remarkably successful. Seventy-two projects were funded in all regions of the state, with 28 of 29 public sector campuses participating. The first year of the program received a positive, and useful, evaluation by an outside consultant.

